

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /005 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: EUR/SE:BSCARLIS/BR

APPROVED BY: EUR/SE:NCLEDSKY

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P 231738Z JUL 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BERN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 182764

FOLLOWING REPEAT ATHENS 6946 ACTION SECSTATE INFO BRUSSELS  
ROME 09 JUL 1976

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 6946

BRUSSELS AND ROME FOR FAA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, ASEC, GR

SUBJECT: SECURITY AT ATHENS AIRPORT

1. FOLLOWING THE JUNE 25 AIR FRANCE HIGHJACKING AND RECENTLY  
REVIVED EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN BY TWA AND OTHER AIRLINES  
OVER CONTINUING WEAKNESSES IN ATHENS AIRPORT SECURITY PRO-  
CEDURES, EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT USG SHOULD CONSIDER, TOGETHER  
WITH OTHER MAJOR COUNTRIES, JOINT ACTION THROUGH APPROPRIATE  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO BRING THE CONCERN OF INTERNATIONAL  
CARRIERS OVER SECURITY CONDITIONS AT ATHENS AIRPORT TO THE  
ATTENTION OF GOG, AND TO STIMULATE EFFECTIVE REMDIAL MEASURES.  
EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT SUCH A COORDINATED APPROACH ON BEHALF  
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OF MAJOR FOREIGN AIRLINES USING ATHENS AIRPORT WOULD BE

MORE EFFECTIVE THAN ANY BILATERAL DEMARCHE. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ON WHAT MECHANISMS --MULTILATERAL OR OTHERWISE--MIGHT BE MOST EFFECTIVE IN EXPRESSING TO THE GOG THE VERY REAL CONCERN OF SOME INTERNATIONAL CARRIERS OVER WHAT THE LOCAL TWA MANAGER, IN A LETTER THIS WEEK TO THE EMBASSY, CHARACTERIZES AS "MAJOR SECURITY PROBLEMS AT ATHENS" AND "NOTICEABLE INDIFFERENCE ON THE PART OF (ATHENS AIRPORT) AUTHORITIES"..

2. A SPOT CHECK JULY 5 BY A TWA SECURITYMANAGER FROM ROME REVEALED THAT PASSENGER AND HAND-CARRIED BAGGAGE SCREENING WAS NOT THOROUGH, AND SEVERAL INSTANCES WERE NOTED OF PASSENGER ENTERING THE DEPARTURE LOUNGE WITHOUT SCREENING. THE GENERAL CONCERN OVER LOCAL SECURITY PROCEDURES IS SHARED BY AT LEAST SWISSAIR, SABENA AND TWA, ALL OF WHICH HAVE REPEATEDLY RAISED THE ISSUE INDEPENDENTLY WITH AIRPORT OFFICIALS AND COLLECTIVELY AT MEETINGS OF THE AIRLINE OPERATORS COMMITTEE, WITHOUT SATISFACTORY RESULTS.

3. THE TWA SECURITY OFFICIAL CALLED AT THE EMBASSY JULY 6 TO EMPHASIZE THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION AND TO ASK THAT THE EMBASSY SUPPORT A POSSIBLE VISIT TO ATHENS BY FAA OFFICIALS AND ASSIST IN TRANSMITTING TO THE GOG A CHECKLIST OF SECURITY PROCEDURES. HE ALSO REPORTED THAT TWA HAS POSITIVE INFORMATION THAT THE HIGHJACKERS BOARDED THE AIR FRANCE FLIGHT IN ATHENS AND HAD PURCHASED TICKETS IN KUWAIT JUNE 22. TWA REP INDICATED THAT TWA VICE PRESIDENT FOR AUDIT AND SECURITY RICHARD NEUMAN IS IN CONTACT WITH FAA CONCERNING INSPECTION VISIT TO ATHENS AND DISCUSSIONS WITH GOG OFFICIALS BY FAA TEAM. EMBASSY WOULD BE PLEASED TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO FAA REPRESENTATIVES AND TO ARRANGE APPOINTMENT WITH GOG OFFICIALS.

4. ON JULY 9, EMBASSY ECON COUNSELOR RAISED INFORMALLY THE QUESTION OF AIRPORT SECURITY WITH THE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND PROVIDED HIM WITH A COPY OF GUIDELINES  
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ON WEAPONS, DANGEROUS DEVICES AND CARRY-ON INSPECTIONS PREPARED BY ATA AND APPROVED FOR IMPLEMENTATION BY FAA. A COPY OF THESE GUIDELINES HAD BEEN GIVEN BY THE EMBASSY TO THE GOVERNOR OF THE GREEK CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY EARLIER THIS YEAR, BUT TWA OFFICIALS RECENTLY EXPRESSED DOUBT WHETHER THE INFORMATION CONTAINED THEREIN HAD BEEN EFFECTIVELY DISSEMINATED TO THE AGENCIES AND PERSONNEL CONCERNED. KUBISCH UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DEMARCHE, PHYSICAL SECURITY, SURVEYS, AIRPORTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 JUL 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ShawDG  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976STATE182764  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** EUR/SE:BSCARLIS/BR  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ShawDG  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <05 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SECURITY AT ATHENS AIRPORT  
**TAGS:** EAIR, ASEC, GR, US, IATA  
**To:** BERN MULTIPLE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006